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**TO:** All Employees

**FROM:** James R. Little  
Administrator

**SUBJECT:** The Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month and the perfect time to celebrate the JWOD Program. Created in 1938, this unique federal procurement program employs nearly 40,000 Americans who are blind or have other severe disabilities, enabling them to lead more productive and independent lives. The program gets its name from its enabling legislation, the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act of 1971, 41 U.S.C. 46-48c. The Act calls on government agencies, including the Farm Service Agency (FSA), to purchase certain products and services from qualified not-for-profit businesses that principally employ the blind or severely disabled. When these businesses can meet delivery and quality requirements at competitive prices, they are, by law, mandatory sources.

The JWOD Program is administered by an independent federal agency, the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled. Two national nonprofit agencies have been established to help the JWOD Committee administer the Act - NIB (National Industries for the Blind) and NISH which focuses on creating employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities. NIB and NISH assist over 600 community-based agencies nationwide in their efforts to employ people with severe disabilities by securing federal contracts under the JWOD Program.

Historically, FSA has been a very strong supporter of the program and a major customer for JWOD supplies and services. Currently, FSA contracts with JWOD-participating agencies for a variety of commodity items, including vegetable oil, bakery mix, and instant nonfat dry milk. FSA also contracts with JWOD distributors and vendors for many non-commodity items and services, among these, office supplies and accessories, compact disks, toner cartridges, temporary help services, and mailroom support services. The JWOD Program also has the capability to provide a variety of services, such as administrative, food service, grounds maintenance, janitorial/custodial, mailroom operation, switchboard operation, and warehousing/distribution.

Products available under the JWOD Program include a wide range of office supplies, cleaning products, hardware items, medical/surgical products, and textiles. These items are distributed through online shopping services from the GSA Advantage! ([www.gsaadvantage.gov](http://www.gsaadvantage.gov)) and GSA Global Supply ([www.gsaglobalsupply.gov](http://www.gsaglobalsupply.gov)). More information about the JWOD program can be found at [www.jwod.com](http://www.jwod.com).

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We should all commit ourselves to greater utilization of the JWOD program, thereby creating new opportunities and employment for persons with severe disabilities. I encourage all FSA personnel to support the JWOD Program whenever possible. In particular, Government Purchase Card users should always buy items furnished by the JWOD Program before considering other commercial sources.

For additional assistance and information, FSA has two JWOD Liaisons, Loretta D'Amico at (202) 720-5513 for non-commodity items and services, or Lisa Brown at (202) 720-0956 for commodity items.